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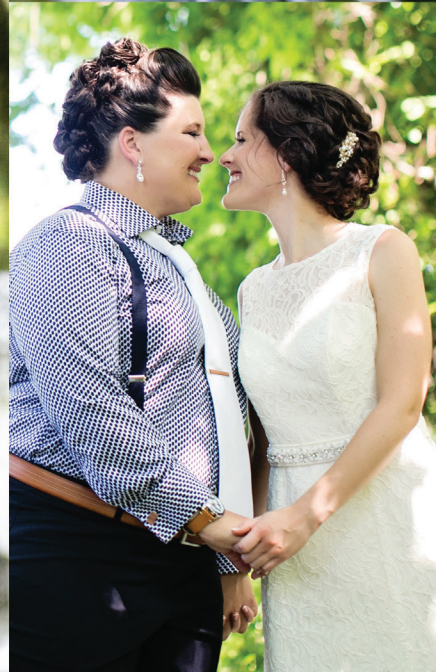
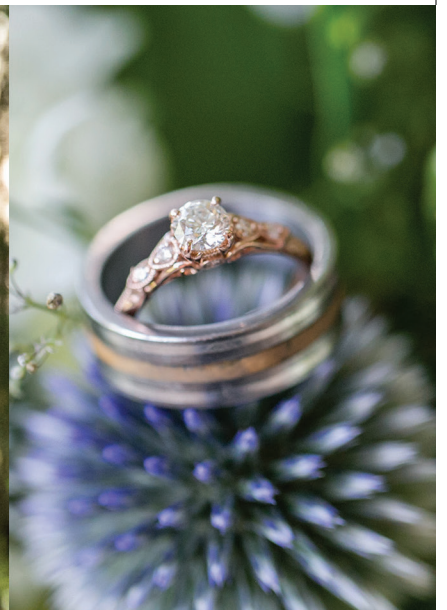
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# CONTENTS

**LAVENDER**

## FEATURE: YEAR END AUTO ISSUE

**32** Ride Review: Porsche 911

**36** What is Your Fantasy...Drive?

**40** The Lift Garage: Mending Cars and Lives

## OUR LAVENDER

**8** From the Editor

**10** A Word in Edgewise

**12-17** Lavender Lens

## OUR SCENE

**18** Arts: Spotlight

**22** Food & Dining: Fitzgerald's

**28** Travel: Lutherland

**30** Travel: Milwaukee

## OUR RESOURCES

**45** Classifieds

**46** The Network

**48** Community Connection

## OUR VOICES

**44** Dateland

**44** Trolin

**50** A Few Words



Page 22: Photo by Hubert Bonnet, Page 18: Photo by Petronella J Ytsma, Page 30: Photo by Carla Waldemar, Page 36: Photo by Randy Stern.

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## ON THE COVER

The Year End Auto Issue gives great ideas for gifts and giving.

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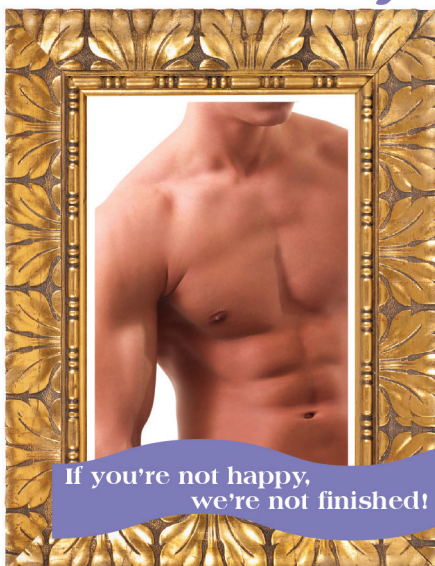
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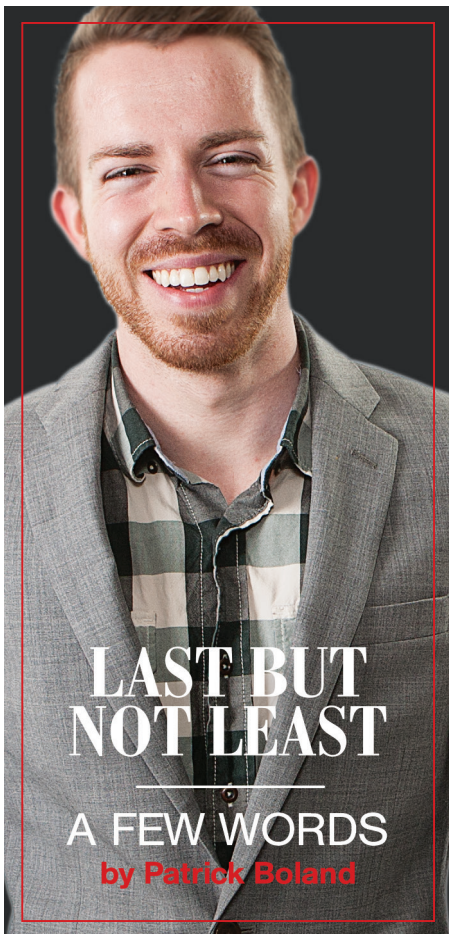
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**A FEW WORDS**  
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# Autoremind: Of Autos and Reminders

The Year End Auto Issue. As often happens with vehicles, they can seem as though they're more like gift ideas than utilitarian tools for life. What we want versus what makes sense. I've been happy to find vehicles that are both fun to drive and make sense, but there's still a part of me that says, "This one. Put a big bow on it and leave it in my driveway, please." But this issue is even more intentional in its gift flavor in that it not only features a luxury sports car, but it also gives us a great idea for a gift of driving somebody else's luxury sports cars for a while...as well as a way we can give back to help others with their vehicles.

How can we give back to help others with their vehicles? I was already familiar with donating cars for tax credit so they can be refurbished and sold, but The Lift Garage is a completely new concept to me. It's the surprise inside this issue. We have clinics with sliding-scale fees, we have food shelves, we have places for affordable clothing, but what do we have for vehicle repairs? I can't emphasize enough what an intriguing business model and organization The Lift Garage is: it reminds us all that something that might be fun and helps us get through our days is also what can make or break someone's ability to make a living, stay employed, and keep a home. It's humbling and it's something more people need to know about.

As for the rest of the issue, I can tell we're getting close to the end of the year when I'm stuffing in content to make sure we fit it all into 2016. This community is an active one, so this issue has a whole lot of Lavender Lenses in it showing off photos of people at events that celebrate and honor each other and what everyone's doing. They're both an archive for what this community cares about as well as a reminder to keep recognizing each other and what you work to achieve.

What we've got coming up for the rest of the year is some pretty fun stuff. The Holiday Gift Guide is both fluffy and resourceful, whether you're looking for something for yourself or someone on your gift list. I get a lot of guff for going shopping and coming home with things for myself because that's when things are on sale. Are you kidding me? Get it. The Guide is also when we get to highlight some local makers, items that are of specific interest to this community, and vouch for particular products that would make any consumer satisfied.

Then, after the Holiday Gift Guide, we'll have the issue that ends the year with best-of recaps and the Lavender Community Awards. It's a feel-good issue full of recognition and respect. We've had some great nominations rolling in but the nominations will be closed by the time you're reading this. If you don't want to miss any future opportunities to nominate people for awards or submit things for the publication when I ask for them (like for weddings or pet photos or things like that), be sure

to follow us on Facebook (search "Lavender Magazine") and check in on our website as you're making your internet rounds. That's where we have the flexibility to inform you of more things and publish exclusive content that can't be found in the print issue.

Another way we can remind you of our fresh website content and events is through our e-newsletter, Lavender Link. Want to find out what's in print and online on a weekly basis? We don't spam you or do anything obnoxious in your inbox, we just tell you what's going on, what you can win in our contests, where you can find our events, and what new stuff has appeared on our website recently. Go to [www.lavendermagazine.com/lavenderlink](http://www.lavendermagazine.com/lavenderlink) to sign up and stay informed.

To piggyback off the topic of where you can find us digitally, did you know that our circulation every two weeks is over 33,500? It is. Between the print copies you can find at the distribution sites, the iPad installations, and the iPhone installations, we reach quite a few people and places. And all for free. So, find us in Newsstand or the App Store and install Lavender Magazine to get it delivered directly to you when each new issue comes out. It's all to make sure this community gets access to content about itself, without barriers or cost.

Also online and on your devices is Big Gay News. If you've been following us through the years, you know that we've had a daily presence in posting, tweeting, and podcasting news for this community from around the world. Linda Raines and Shane Lueck find the news, Shane and I record the daily podcasts. So, if you want to keep up with just a smattering of stories a day (or if you want to hear my rather thick Minnesota accent...at times, not all the time), follow us on Twitter at @biggaynews for the daily headlines and find us on iTunes to get the daily podcasts.

Lastly, our events year is winding down. We've had two events a month — First Thursday for the happy hour crowd and Score Thursday for the sports crowd — and we've held them at various places, from hotels to furnishings stores to bars to the only gay sports bar and restaurant in town (that's going gangbusters!). Check your calendars and clear the nights because the next Score Thursday is going to be at Betty Danger's Country Club in Northeast Minneapolis followed by the next First Thursday at The Intercontinental Hotel in Downtown St. Paul. We get around.

And I do hope to see you around. As the days get shorter and colder, let's be sure to find each other and celebrate this community whenever we can.

With you and with thanks,  
Andy ■



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# A Tale from the Dark Side

Some time ago, well, several decades now, back in the early 1970s, though it seems like yesterday, I witnessed an event that has remained with me to this day.

An acquaintance of mine (I'll call her Emma) was having a house party one afternoon for our usual gang. We were in our early 30s then, and had known one another for years. At some point, Emma's parents dropped in for a while, and with them a couple of other "adults" including the man who stars in this incident. He was unremarkable in any outward way other than being older and supposedly more adult than the dozen members of our group. An ordinary guy who bore an ugly, unwanted revelation.

Introducing himself to Emma, he asked if she were married and then, if she had children. She said she was no longer married, that she did not have children, nor did she intend to have any in the future. He launched into a lecture on how "people like us, with brains and education," should be the ones having children, warning that otherwise "those inferiors" would be outbreeding us "superior people."

Emma answered something to the effect that nevertheless, she

had no intention of having children and nothing would change her opinion on that matter.

At this point, her interlocutor, who I must repeat had never laid eyes nor anything else on Emma, drew himself up to his full height, puffed out his chest and declared, "I could make you have children! I could make you pregnant right now!"

Emma looked him in the eye and enunciating slowly and clearly said, "I don't think so. I've had a tubal ligation and there's nothing you can do to make me pregnant no matter how hard you try."

To this day, I've never seen the kind of change that washed over his face. From self-assured superiority, his countenance ran a gamut of frustration, rage, chagrin, and, finally, utter powerlessness. Without another word, he turned and stalked out of our lives.

The single arrow in his quiver was sexual dominance, and once that was symbolically snatched and broken over Emma's knee, he was finished.

Nothing new. A tale told for centuries before; a tale being told today. What hope for tomorrow? ■



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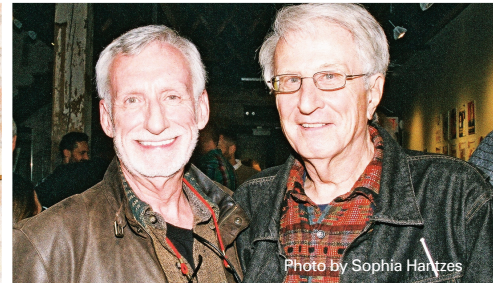
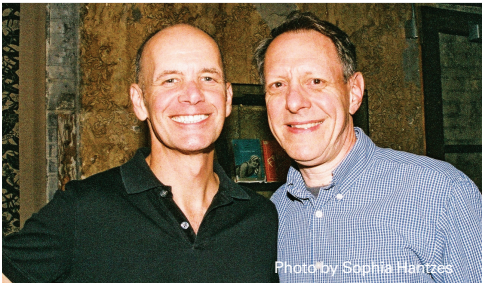
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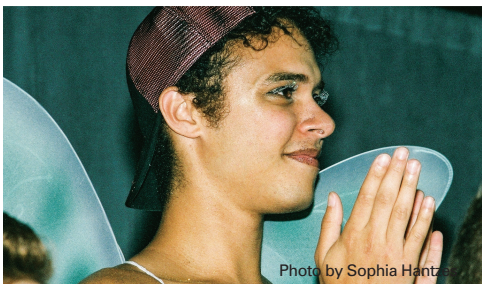
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*A Raisin in the Sun.* Photo by Petronella J Ytsma

## A RAISIN IN THE SUN

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[www.parksquaretheatre.org](http://www.parksquaretheatre.org)

Lorraine Hansberry (1930–1965) is considered by many to be the greatest playwright in African American history and in the history of women in the American theater. She died young, at 34, of pancreatic cancer. She was a piercing observer of society, history, and race. Her 1959 masterpiece, *A Raisin in the Sun*, is largely regarded as The Great African American Play and, by some, as The Great American Play. The FBI also traced its development as it was suspected to be an undertaking of radical proportions that could disrupt American society.

At Park Square Theatre, director Warren C. Bowles says that “while working on this production I have had to keep reminding myself that this family is living in a nation, in a society, for which *Brown v. Topeka* is very new and seldom implemented. This family is not trying to make a big cultural or political stand but, as Mama says, ‘...just (trying) to find the nicest place for the least amount of money for my family.’ They just want to better their condition.”

Bowles has also paid mind to the fact that *A Raisin in the Sun* is so iconic that it can fall into gross misinterpretation. Something that helped him tend to this concern was mulling over a parody that reflects this. Hence, he adds, “Secondly, George C. Wolfe’s *The Last Mama on the Couch* play shows us exactly what we must avoid. These characters are not two-dimensional, symbolic icons. This is a very realistic family that truthfully reflects black life in the ‘50s.”

## WHO’S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?

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Edward Albee (1930–2016) looms in the eyes of many as the top American playwright of his generation. He made his mark after the heyday of icons Lillian Hellman, Tennessee Williams, and Arthur Miller and, to a large degree, before the ascendance of Sam Shepard, Wendy Wasserstein, David Mamet, and August Wilson. Had his contemporary, Lorraine Hansberry, not died so soon, at age 34 in 1965, Albee would have probably been noted alongside her in the public eye

during their mutual slice of history. Since he was gay and she was bisexual, the esteem of GLBT people would have clearly been strengthened.

That said, though Albee was openly gay and was interviewed twice by *Lavender* and once on the cover, he was insistent that he didn’t want to be reduced to being categorized as a “gay playwright.” His apprehension was universal and he considered his sexuality as a part of his whole personality. For example, he was a scathing observer of the heterosexual male-female relationship and some of his best plays demonstrate that. By the way, he got very addled about those who falsely said that he meant for *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*’s two couples to be a reflection of two gay couples. They were most definitely not!

If you want to remember Albee as he probably would have liked to be remembered, then see a revival of one of his truly great plays, *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, written in 1962. Theatre Uncorked and the resident theater company of the Ames Center, Chameleon Theatre Circle, are co-producing the classic at the Ames Center, a major destination for performing arts in the southern suburbs.

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Illusion Theater has become the go-to place to see the work of Transatlantic Love Affair, a group which regularly creates enthusiastically acclaimed and box office smash work at Minnesota Fringe Festivals. Their hit last year, *105 Proof*, is being remounted so that those of us unable to catch it then can do so now.

Conceived and directed by Diogo Lopes with collaboration by an actor ensemble masterful in imaginative physical movement, TLA creates an original story about a small-time bootlegger, the cost of moonshine, and criminality during the age of Prohibition and the Tommy gun. The sound elements of a TLA show are always unique. In *105 Proof*, the Blues are rendered by Dustin Tessler on guitar and Adam J. Patterson on drums.

## FIVE

Nov. 11–20

Dreamland Arts, 677 Hamline Ave. N  
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800-838-3006

[www.tctwentypercent.org](http://www.tctwentypercent.org)

20% Theatre Company Twin Cities likes to focus on new work that reflects individual stories of queer people in their own voices. Their latest offering goes down that road as it looks that the less than ideal lives that some young girls are subjected to. When innocence is lost and uglier realities become the formative impressions on a young mind and heart, what are the ramifications?

Claire Avitable, the group's artistic director, shares: "*FIVE* is a new performance work that has been developing inside of me for years. One could even say, since I was five years old. I am the playwright and am co-directing with Shalee Coleman. However, a great deal of the spoken text and movement in the piece come directly from the ensemble, which is why this is a truly collaborative new performance. *FIVE* explores addiction, abandonment, family, queer identity, and other life struggles that haunt us and try to define us, and our path to letting them go. The production melds storytelling, theater, and movement composition."

## ORANGE

Nov. 11–Dec. 4

Mixed Blood Theatre, 1501 S 4th St.  
Minneapolis

612-338-6131

[www.mixedblood.com](http://www.mixedblood.com)

Mixed Blood Theatre has long looked into issues involving disabilities. Their current work, *ORANGE*, deals with autism, a



*Five.* Photo by 20% Theatre Company Twin Cities

condition or disorder rated on a spectrum, which the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* says begins in childhood and causes problems in forming relationships and communicating with other people.

Playwright Aditi Brennan Kapil relates that the play's characters "snuck up on me. I intended to write a play about driving through Orange County, a play about that night when you separate from the safety of parental supervision, make poor choices, live through something a little dangerous with your friends, and in the morning everything

is different. But the character who started speaking on the page was not the typical teen I thought she would be. She took over the play I thought I was writing and demanded an adventure of her own, one I resisted, one I didn't think she was ready for. All parents have fears as their children near adulthood, but I suspect the reason *ORANGE* took this particular form has to do with how much more pronounced that fear can be when your child is atypical." ■



*Orange.* Photo by Rich Ryan





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# Fitzgerald's

I was born in St. Paul, near the Capitol. My parents took my brother and me out to the country to raise us, but I am pretty sure I've been magnetically attracted to St. Paul my whole life. I can leave it, and I'll come back to it.

While a wee lass in the country, I'd idealized a magical place called "Grand Avenue" where the buildings were old, the streetlights were streetlamps, and there was always ivy growing on brick walls. Its street blocks were probably scented like the Aspen Mulling spices that the *Victorian Homes* magazine always smelled like in the 1980s.

But, what I had yet to learn about was Cathedral Hill. Grand Avenue is grand, but Cathedral Hill has even more of what I wanted. Churches and business buildings and restaurants and shops all mixed in with houses that make me swoon. There are books published about these locations. There is a bus tour that shows us where the gangsters lived. There's an air of romance to the whole neighborhood. And, there was a man who called this area home named F. Scott Fitzgerald, author of *The Great Gatsby*. A man for whom the newest restaurant at Western

and Selby is named: Fitzgerald's.

Everyone's got a few versions of who they are, from more buttoned-up to playful to downright raucous. The idea behind this new bar and eatery is to present a restaurant that's the more casual (yet still fully deserving of its place in the crown that is Cathedral Hill) version of something that's become more of an ideal than a person. But lest we forget, F. Scott Fitzgerald was once Scott. This is where he might have caroused. It's where he may have stayed long hours, eating good food and getting (or remaining) properly soused. It's where I can imagine a man with a look on his face of someone who has been fed to great satisfaction. Okay, that was me. I've had that look. Twice.

You may remember the space as being the Salt Cellar, where steaks and tableside-made salads happened for a while. Much like the man for whom this new destination is named, the restaurant on the corner has reinvented itself. The team behind it has been a prolific one in St. Paul in recent years with restaurants including Public Kitchen + Bar, Handsome Hog, Ox Cart Ale House, and Eagle Street



The Fitz burger: probably just as messy and tasty as Scott, himself.





noah wolf



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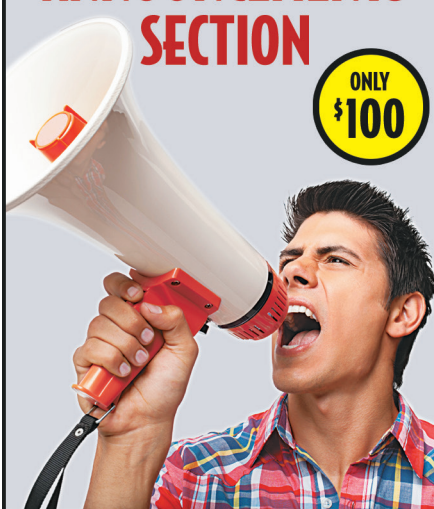
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(Clockwise from top left) A bowl of comfort, the pappardelle with Italian sausage and beef ragu; Chef Graham Messenger with a grin and a glimmer; the perfectly executed french onion soup with crouton and gruyere; a salty Philly cheesesteak with house-made Cheez Whiz; the pizza with sweet caramelized onions and spicy chorizo; a soon-to-be-famous fried egg sandwich of bacon, egg, cheese, pickled onions, and harissa mayo on a Saint Agnes Baking Co. milk bun.



Grille. This one pulled some tremendous talent from Ox Cart to bring it to fruition: chef Graham Messenger and general manager Joe Paton. And the whole space has had some work done, both structurally and cosmetically. The team listened to what the neighborhood was asking for, and doubled the bar to become one large rectangle, added a bunch of hightop tables, and made a more clearly defined auxiliary area for more space or private dining if the large barn door is utilized to separate it from the majority of the restaurant. The space looks smart; it makes sense. I give high marks to the improvements.

While the neighborhood was asking for casual, we also know that it's a neighborhood that expects things done well. The neighboring restaurants

have set the bar pretty high for what goes at Western and Selby and we're the ones who benefit from those standards. So, while you might be wandering in for a late lunch while watching the game, know that you can order bar food, and it will be so good.

The lunch and dinner entrées span from pizza to sandwiches to burgers to chicken and steak and fish dishes, while the brunch looks inviting with favorites like hash, bennies, omelets, or even ribs. I was able to get a few bites of the fried egg sandwich from the brunch menu and know that I will be back to explore more. All of the baked goods are from St. Paul's own Saint Agnes Baking Co. and I'm a sucker for the egg sandwich on a milk bun with bacon, American cheese, a sweet and briny pickled red onion, and a harissa





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mayo that has more sweet than heat.

I can attest to eating some sumptuous dishes, myself. For starters, the jalapeño and cheddar croquettes are a reimagined version of poppers. These fried fingerlings of cheese and heat give the same mouth-feel as a conventional popper, with a much more satisfying center of cheese with the ambient flavor of jalapeño. Smear them through the swoosh of béchamel to make each bite more than you knew you wanted from a bar app.

If you're more in the mood for soup or salad for your mealtime warmup, I recommend the french onion soup and wedge salad. The french onion soup is the standard and satisfying savory brown broth in a crock that is chock full of onions and croutons and oozy melted cheese. I took a picture of it to warm me up when I'll need it in the upcoming winter months. And the wedge salad with red onion and sunflower seeds has the most inoffensive blue cheese dressing I've ever encountered. Not being a fan of blue cheese dressing, I was pleasantly surprised that the creamy base was absolutely delicious first, then punctuated by the crumbles of blue cheese second. I think this is a winner for those who both love and mildly dislike the funky stuff.

You've got a few options for how to approach your entrées. There are sandwiches and burgers, pizzas, and full-on entrées for your consideration. And I'll be honest, of what I've tasted, you'll find me hanging out in the sandwiches and burgers portion of the menu because that's where I'm happiest. Oh, the pizza with Spanish chorizo and caramelized onion was delicious and the pappardelle with Italian sausage and beef ragu is very pleasing (the ragu could use a touch more garlic, methinks), but the stars of my constellation are the Philly cheesesteak and the Fitz burger. The cheesesteak is a salty, unctuous sandwich made with sliced ribeye and house-made Cheez Whiz, making it a glorious mess of a meal. And the Fitz burger has not only a well-salted, flavorful burger patty, but enough Russian dressing, cheese, and pickles-per-bite to make anyone say, Big Mac who?

Finally, for dessert, you may not have many options, but you have good ones. There's Izzy's ice cream and then there are a few selections that Chef Graham is quick to point out were conceptualized by Cheyenne Broughton of one of the other restaurants in the family, Handsome Hog. They needed to be good and they needed to be doable in the fast-quality environment and they pulled that off with aplomb.

The chocolate brownie comes in slabs that defy reason in that they're so soft and gooey but still retain their structure. With a dark cocoa sauce, toasted

nuts, some crisps (that are actually called feuilletine, but let's not get too fancy), the dessert is a hit for those who love the cacao. I'm the one who'll be hoarding the cranberry custard all for myself. I'm a goon for the puddings and flans and crème brûlée and pots de creme, but this is actually a posset and I could not be happier to add that word to my lexicon. And daily diet. A fine, smooth pudding with a hint of cranberry is the light-pink base that carries a bit of compote and brown salty-sweet crumbles. (Not to be confused: Graham's the chef; the flavorful topping is brown-butter streusel. You're welcome.)

If you're stopping in for a drink around the massive rectangular bar, be sure to check out one of the many beers on tap. The cocktails were concocted and give both playful ingredients and flavors as well as location-centric names. And, I'm happy to report, that they were more than happy to provide on-the-spot non-alcoholic drinks for me as a non-drinker when I said I'd like "something tasty with ginger." Next time, I'll probably try "something delicious with cherry" or something equally ambiguous because I know they'll give me something good.

When I asked Chef Graham what was different between what he had been making at Ox Cart Ale House and Fitzgerald's, he said that in addition to the local ingredients being similar in importance, so is the speed of execution. Ox Cart is positioned near the baseball stadium in Lowertown and required fast foods including sausages. The concept up the hill at Fitzgerald's maintains the fast foods that rely heavily on the prep but are able to be completed and plated quickly. So, even though I might joke about moving in and taking over a table or booth for an afternoon, know that you can get in and out easily if you need to. It's a neighborhood joint that wants to make the people happy, whether you're lingering like Fitz or on your way elsewhere, but want a good meal in your belly in the meanwhile.

Fitzgerald's is already proving itself to be a popular addition to the neighborhood with the crowds I've seen packed in there so far. I wish the team well and am happy to welcome it to the grand collection of restaurants at that intersection. Leave time for parking, save room for the custard, and I'll see you on the Hill. ■

#### FITZGERALD'S

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(From left) Cranberry custard with brown-butter streusel and cranberry compote; chocolate brownie with ice cream and cocoa sauce; and cocktails called the St. Paul Sour with rye, red wine, lemon, egg white, and amaro; Reason for Regions with tequila, chartreuse, blood orange liquor, and lemon; and Brandy, You're a Fine Girl with brandy, blood orange liquor, and lemon.



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Wartburg Castle. Photo by André Nestler

# Lutherland

Sometimes you just wanna use those golden vacay days baking in the sand, never leaving the all-inclusive until it's time for the airport taxi. But more and more, travelers are seeking to expand their minds and outlooks with experiences beyond the volleyball game — following a family tree, connecting Civil War battlefields, or honing cooking skills.

I've enjoyed that in the U.S., tracing the steps of Martin Luther King, for instance. This time, I'm off to follow the trail of his namesake, Martin Luther. Yes, the man who launched the Protestant Reformation in 1517. Next year will mark the 500th anniversary of that seismic event, and towns all along his trail are getting ready to celebrate. C'mon along! We'll also be in the company of the great painter Lucas Cranach, Luther's pal, and J.S. Bach, his big admirer.

Whatever your religious stance (and I'm a devout unbeliever), it's impossible not to admire this philosophical pioneer: a monk who came to believe that man's relationship to God, and road to heaven, required no priestly middlemen. Luther translated the Bible into the people's spoken language, German, to make it accessible to all. He even wrote hymns so congregations could actively participate in a service (another first). And he got into a lot of trouble for all of the above.

I began the trail in Erfurt, founded in 742 and still spliced today with

cobblestone streets below half-timbered buildings. Its charming Merchants' Bridge of 1325 is lined with homes and shops à la Florence's Ponte Vecchio (but this one is even more vecchio: older). Peek in at a puppet maker, a purveyor of ice cream, the antiques shops and cafés it houses as you make your way to the Cathedral, where Luther was ordained (home of a Cranach painting plus Jesus as a life-sized candlestick) aside St. Severus, its next-door rival. They're separated by a vast staircase on which outdoor opera is performed. (I witnessed *Tosca* mysteriously ascend into heaven with a sword instead of landing in the Tiber.)

Near a statue of Luther as The Great Reformer stands the church where Bach's parents married. But long before that, Luther had enrolled in the university here, where he studied law, as Dad decreed, until encountering a terrible thunderstorm which evoked a vow: "If I live, I promise to become a monk." So, off next to the Augustinian Monastery where we can visit his humble, chilly cell and a replica of his Bible with handwritten notes in the margins.

Erfurt's Anger Museum boasts an enchanting collection of apple-cheeked Medieval Madonnas — plucked eyebrows, coiffures above high foreheads — and altarpieces of alert saints. Roll back the clock even further as you explore the town's Old Synagogue, traced from the





(From left) **Bachhaus.** Photo courtesy of Bachhaus; **Martin Luther oversees Erfurt.** Photo by Carla Waldemar; **Merchant's Bridge of Erfurt.** Photo by Carla Waldemar

11th century. During a pogrom of 1349, Jews hid their precious gold beneath the floor, recently unearthed and displayed, along with early Bibles — one, of 1160, the size of a coffee table. By the 1860s, Jews banished, the building served as a dance hall.

No such celebrations under the bleak days of the German Democratic Republic (1949–89). A former Stasi prison today houses a museum depicting life (if you care to call it that) under the Soviets. These grim cells awaited many, after the dreaded middle-of-the-night knock on the door: “You’re coming with us to clarify some facts.” Today there was plenty of dancing again amid the rainbow banners of Christopher Street Day.

Follow Luther west to Weimar, where he lodged in the Franciscan monastery attached to City Palace, HQ of the short-lived Weimar Republic between world wars. Today it’s a hothouse of medieval paintings. “The Cranachs?” asks the attendant as I rush in. “Turn right” and there they are: a desolate Christ, betrayed; *Caritas*, a sensuous young woman; and portraits of Luther, like photographs enriched with understanding. Luther as an earnest youth with searching eyes; an older, pensive Luther; and the graying figure of later years.

Another Cranach — his masterpiece altar — resides in the church of St. Peter and Paul, featuring a crucifixion scene witnessed, in the corner, by John the Baptist. Wander over to Market Square to spot Cranach’s house and the former abode of J.S. Bach, marked with a plaque.

Weimar is a cauldron of creative talent. The homes of Goethe and Schiller — rival writers whose statues stand side-by-side — are open to tour, as is the abode of Franz Liszt and library of patroness Duchess Anna Amalia, whose voluptuous Rococo library houses Luther’s 1543 translation of the Bible.

And the pulse goes on. Weimar is also the birthplace of the Bauhaus Movement in architecture and crafts founded by Walter Gropius in 1919 at Bauhaus University, later shut down by the Nazis, but today still alive with the work and spirit of artists Klee, Kandinsky, and Feininger in its sleek, Deco-like building. Tour, also, the Bauhaus Museum, showcasing objects destined for everyday life: tea sets to furniture, designed to be “attractive, functional, cheerful and cheap,” still glam today.

Not so gorgeous: the city’s Archive Building, fronted by rubble to represent the “crushed history” of the Gestapo’s former interrogation center here. The infamous Buchenwald camp nearby has recently become open to tour.

Hop the rails heading east to Gotha, first mentioned in a document signed by Charlemagne in 775, and today dominated by its signature castle, centerpiece of a vast, wooded garden-park. Friedenstien Castle,

named Rock of Peace by its builder, arose in the middle of the Thirty Years’ War. As the White House of its day, it housed both working and living quarters, gamboling stylistically from Baroque to Rococo to Classicism in its 365 rooms — ballroom to bedchambers, library, an exquisite theater, and cache of precious paintings. The Herzogliches Museum across the street is home to many Cranachs (his house borders Market Square), including the oh-so-human portraits of Christ and Mary Magdalene and the famous “Gotha Lovers” — he, mesmerized by her beauty, she with modest eyes cast down.

Oh, but what about Luther? Yes, he paid frequent visits to preach here at the Augustinian monastery where he held office. In his will, he declared his wish to be buried in Gotha (didn’t happen).

“My dear town,” Luther called Eisenach. It’s here, at age 14, his parents sent him to earn his keep as a choirboy in St. George’s Church. In those days, the lads strolled, house-to-house, to literally sing for their supper. One kind family took him in. He lived in their half-timbered dwelling, now a museum called Lutherhaus — today not only a treasury of medieval art, but his boyhood bedchamber. Displays tell the story of “Luther and the Bible” in interactive form, explaining the whys and hows of translating the work into German.

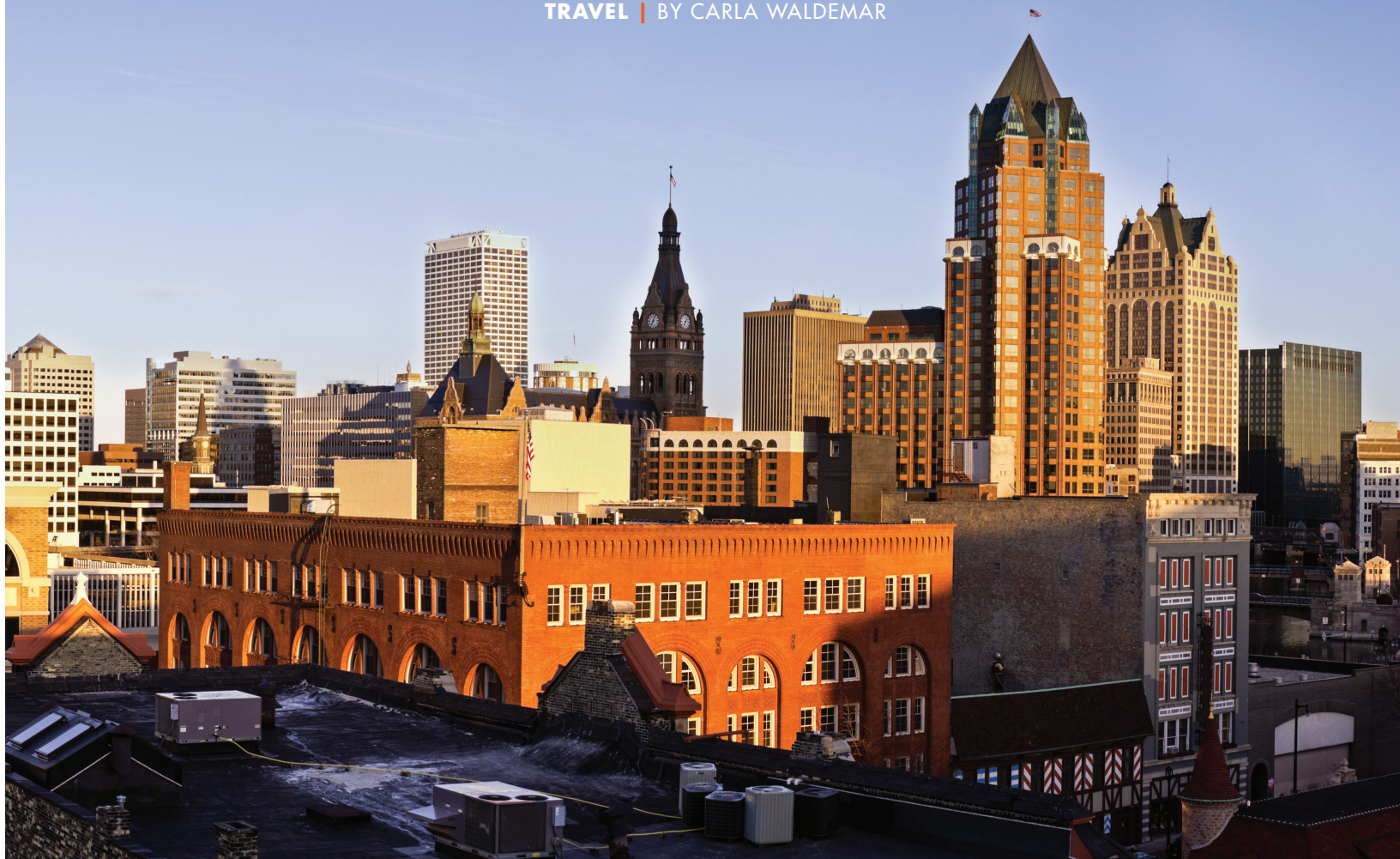
Visit the Latin school he attended (as did his admirer, J.S. Bach) and St. George’s Church where, excommunicated and ostracized by now, he preached to standing room only crowds. (Bach was baptized here; four generations of his family occupied the organ bench, where Telemann and Pachelbel also played.)

Above the town rises Wartburg Castle — perhaps Germany’s most iconic — where Luther was benignly incarcerated for a year while a hunted man. He used this time to translate the Bible. He also composed 30-some hymns — “A Mighty Fortress” the most famous — which Bach later adopted in his cantatas. Head to the castle’s art gallery, where — surprise — more Cranachs bloom, including portraits of Luther’s parents.

J.S. Bach was born here, and his early home is now the Bachhaus, a museum depicting his life and his music, exploring questions. What did he actually write? (Many conflicting editions.) What did he look like? (Only one authenticated portrait.) What is a fugue? Polyphony? Live concerts hourly and recordings in surround-sound.

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Downtown Milwaukee. Photo courtesy of Bigstock/benkrut

# Milwaukee Eats

## BEARD BINGEING

Back in the day, I was given a cookbook by connoisseur of all things yummy, James Beard. I traded it in for one by Betty Crocker. What did I know? Times have changed, and so has my palate. So, when invited to join a dining blitz at venues of nominees and winners of the coveted James Beard Award, I hopped a plane for a metropolis of fine dining.

No, no, not Manhattan, where the price of valet parking could buy an entire dinner in the city I'm talking about: Milwaukee. Pack your stretchiest XXLs and come along as we hit the bold names of today and tomorrow.

Start the weekend with brunch at Café Calatrava, anchoring the city's art museum, whose iconic silhouette of white "bird wings" glides open every morning (photo op!). Its glass facade frames the brawny waves of Lake Michigan, while Beard-nominated Chef Jason Gorman wets our whistles with blood orange mimosas to accompany a life-altering buffalo mozzarella panna cotta gilded with nectarines, cured tomato, and a splash of balsamic. Mini-pancakes of red kuri squash pureed with ricotta become sublime when gilded with orange and chestnut honey. Honey

piques Jason's white truffle scrambled eggs, too. Then, just when we think we've surpassed nirvana, along come lobsterwurst Benedicts to confirm our view. Jason's genius twist: a base of rösti potatoes and a fillip of watermelon radish.

Do a victory lap around the newly reconfigured museum, ogling con-tempo masters (Warhol, Chuck Close), a gallery devoted to homegirl Georgia O'Keeffe, and bold names, old to new.

For lunch, it's off to DanDan, fueling the trendsters of the Third Ward with a modern spin on Chinese American food by two friends, Dan and Dan, who grew up with childhood memories of dining in Chinese cafés and, says Dan, "what made me happy will make you happy." No lie. Elaborating on Milwaukee's culinary scene, Dan Van Rite (semi-finalist for his former work at Hinterland) and bud Dan Jacobs agree: "We all generally get along: less competition; more good, honest food. Lots of chefs moved in during 2013, Milwaukee's Golden Age."

The Golden Age continues in the Dans' joint venture, which debuted in August, featuring a menu honoring revamped classics: egg





(From left) 1937 Harley-Davidson. NL bespoke suits in the Third Ward. Steak tartare at Bartolotta's Lake Park Bistro. Photos by Carla Waldemar

roll, Shanghai ribs, salt and pepper squid, a don't-miss plate of smashed cucumbers. Pork-enriched DanDan noodles, roast duck chow fun, and (another must) General Tso's cauliflower. Dessert? Donuts. Really.

The first Milwaukee chef to garner a Beard award was Sanford's Sandy D'Amato back in 1996. Passing the torch to chef/patron Justin Aprahamian was no mistake. He was voted best chef in the Midwest in 2014. I've eaten here over the years and can testify that it remains the gold standard of fine dining, enjoyed in a warm atmosphere as refined as the food.

Jason's seven-course tasting menu brought our taste buds to attention with highlights like sake-glazed black cod paired with soba noodles and ginger-pickled carrots; rabbit and foie gras agnolotti noodles tossed with turnips and walnuts in rabbit-clam broth (What did I tell you?); grilled quail, peaches and kale (think BBQ as it's eaten in heaven); elk tenderloin and sausage with creamed corn and zucchini (how Midwest is that?); and chilled cantaloupe soup floating a scoop of vanilla-butter-milk sorbet.

So, where to head after dinner divine? Why, Bryant's Cocktail Lounge, Milwaukee's oldest (1938) and semifinalist for Outstanding Bar Program 2013. Belly up to the aquarium above the bar or choose a quiet table while your server counsels you about a cocktail (over 450 in the repertoire but no printed list). When I hinted for "something like an Old Fashioned," the Lonesome Highway came my way. Yearn for an ice cream-cooled Pink Squirrel? (Your grandma would.) Here's the place.

Breakfast the next morning was at our home base, the Third Ward's new Kimpton Journeyman Hotel, where I summoned avocado toast while scanning the dinner menu: Wisconsin artisanal cheese; smoked Spanish mackerel; pork belly pizza (yes!); and chicken with Middle Eastern accents like golden raisin and saffron couscous, apricots, and olives. A future winner?

To walk it off, check out the Ward's indie boutiques like Shoo, NL bespoke suits, and Retique resale clothes, (where I scored Vera Wang leggings for \$9). Nearby, the Public Market building holds local wonders like Anodyne Coffee, St. Paul Fish Co. (lobster dinners \$15.95), and Kehr's Candies, with photos of employees Dorothy, Wilma, and Mildred. Head to the Marshall Building for six floors of galleries and a Third Friday crawl.

Lunch today was DIY. Well, sorta: a cooking class at Braise, where chef/owner Dave Swanson, a Beard Best Chef: Midwest winner, led us through the secrets of rolling pasta and gnocchi, which we then de-

voured. Or stop in for Dave's farm-to-table fare like grilled Hen of the Woods mushrooms with Parmesan custard, black ramp ragout and jam; cabbage-wrapped salmon mousseline with marjoram creamed corn and chili pork fat vinaigrette; or steamed pork buns.

Harley fans, don't seek the Holy Grail on an empty stomach. Breakfast first at the Potawatomi Hotel & Casino's Canal Street Café (and maybe win the down payment on a hog at the slots). My omelet (spinach, mushrooms, Swiss) hit the spot. As did my neighbor's huevos.

The museum itself, in Harley-Davidson's hometown, explores the company's and nation's history since 1903, the first year some smart fella replaced his pony with a bike. The invention changed everything from police work to ice cream bar delivery, landing women in the workplace and the saddle during wartime, and fueling Hollywood's rebels. On view: a pristine model from every single year and a celeb's rhinestone number. Pause for a selfie astride a hog.

Lunch at another Milwaukee legend, one of the Bartolotta family's cafés. Lake Park Bistro occupies a historic pavilion above the majestic lake. Chef Adam Siegel was a Best Chef: Midwest winner in 2008 for his country French flair, including a silk-smooth chicken liver mousse and killer onion soup, on through classic bistro entrées to elegant desserts.

While here on the east side, pop into Villa Terrace Decorative Arts Museum, a Tuscan-styled mansion clad in class-act antiques; the gorgeous Oriental Theater, a Roaring Twenties beauty; and Van Trier, a neighborhood bar frozen in a time-war with murals covering every surface, antlers galore and platoons of German steins. Fast forward to Black Cat Alley, a brand-new lane of arresting murals blooming on its bricks.

Grand finale: dinner at Ardent, refreshingly not-so-grand in decor (water pipes, iffy art) run by Best New Restaurant finalist Justin Carlisle, a genial chef who also patrols the cozy site topping off water glasses. His food sense is acutely focused. A nine-course tasting menu delivers even better (and with more complexity) than it reads. Justin's curiosity propels him to experiment with, say, cucumbers three ways; a course dedicated to carrots (think apricot, mint); and milk: in bread, in butter, and in Muenster cheese, each produced from the same batch of flavorful milk. Beef tartare appears in a round the size of a snack cracker, layered with bone marrow and deviled eggs. See what I mean? The in-crowd knows to stop by after hours on weekends when Justin's scene segues into Red Light Ramen, an underground speakeasy of slurpy noodles.

To get your own Beard buzz, check [visitmilwaukee.org](http://visitmilwaukee.org). ■



By Randy Stern

# Ride Review 2017 Porsche 911

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hat is it like to be an icon? Many things go into being an icon. It all depends on many factors: legacy, longevity, class, style, grace, achievement, attraction, and untouchability. One cannot simply be an icon without having to own most, if not all, of these virtues.

This is the story of the Porsche 911. For the few who have owned one, they have stories that frame its iconic status. Whether they have competed on the track or have taken its driver to the upper limits of driving dynamics, the Porsche 911 claimed its iconic status the same way it lures in anyone within its grasp.

At car shows, we point at it and take long looks at its timeless shape. On the road, we try our best not to have our necks snap at the sight of one in traffic. We celebrate the

old ones and the new ones; there is over 50 years of iconography from Stuttgart and Zuffenhausen.

Let me get personal for a moment. I have been on this planet as long as the 911. In my youth in Los Angeles, seeing a 911 was like seeing a Mercedes-Benz, a Ford, or a Toyota; they were common sights. We were spoiled seeing a 911 go about its daily drive, as we jumped in more common vehicles alongside it.

In my 36 years of fulfilling the privilege of being a licensed driver, I have yet to drive a Porsche 911. You would think that I would have already done so, considering the large number of them on the roads in my native homeland of southern California. It was not for a lack of trying. It is about respecting the car for what it is. To me, they were untouchable, a virtue of its icon status.

For those of us who can touch them (as owners, enthusiasts, drivers, and Porsche

dealership personnel) we are a special group of humans who know the power and the responsibility of Porsche's lasting legacy on this planet. In the name of this magazine, I can honestly say that I have fulfilled a lifelong dream, to become one of you, only for a short period of time.

Unlike the 911s of my youth, this one (the 2017 Type 991.2) is a completely different animal. It looks like it has been untouched since the mid-1960s, but it is much larger than the original. The horizontally opposed six-cylinder engine remains in the same place it always had, the rear of the car, but it is now cooled by liquid instead of air. There are many things that have evolved since the original. I will be exploring everything in due time here.

When I was getting my driver's license, the 911 came in two body styles: coupe and Targa. They still make a coupe and the Targa is not exactly the same as it was; the rear

Photos by Randy Stern





piece of the roof is power-retractable. The Cabriolet was a more recent addition dating back to 1982. The tester I got was the Carrera 4S Cabriolet, which offers a great all-season multi-layered roof with a quick and amazing power retraction system. The roof quickly tucks away after the rear cover is lifted up. Just seeing it operate is a thing of beauty, with windows folding down (and up) along with the roof in masterful sequence. With the roof up, the Cabriolet retains a lot of the 911's signature look except for the rear quarter windows of the coupe and wraparound glass of the Targa.

That signature look has been massaged with the times. The headlamps are shaped the same, even with two main beams and four LED running lamps in each unit. The nose and rear have seen some nips and tucks from the original Type 991, with the rear end getting most of the updates. New LED lighting adorns the rear end, with a new rear "grille" and thinner brake light above it. The taillights now feature a more three-dimensional design than before. On this tester, it wore some of the best wheels ever created for the Carrera S/4S with 20-inch alloys, 8.5 inches in the front, 11.5 inches in the rear. These wore Pirelli P Zero tires, 245/35 up front, 305/30 in the rear. I could not stop staring at them when I was beside this car.

Porsche does not believe in proving a standard color scheme, because it is all up to the individual and how they want their car to look and feel. Our tester wore a deep GT Silver Metallic paint with the Cabriolet roof in black. Open up the doors and this tester had an espresso leather interior. Translation: a brown color scheme with a silver/black car. You might not think it works, but I do. Porsches are canvases for aesthetic, function, and performance. With that said, the espresso interior is absolutely gorgeous.

The sports seats are firm, but perfect for the task of the 911: driving. Bolstering is fine, but there are other options available for whichever comfort or support level you want. You do not want to be extremely cushy behind the wheel of a 911. I was amazed at the kind of headroom I had under the Cabriolet's roof and the clearance of the top of the windshield for vision with the roof

open. There are two rear seats, but they are there for insurance purposes. In fact, it is a 911 tradition to have them. You can put baby seats back there, but I would not recommend anyone else. Driving a Porsche 911 is really meant for two people: driver and navigator.

As a tall person, I had to adjust to make sure I had good eye sight on the five-dial instrument binnacle. The perfectly sized new 918 Spyder-inspired GT Sport steering wheel did cut off the fuel, oil pressure, and temperature gauges. The remaining three gauges are in perfect sight. The second to the right dial is a TFT screen that you can read multiple functions with for trip, vehicle, and an auxiliary mapping screen. There are other "lower" readouts for speed, odometer/tripometer, and time/temperature. The 911 is designed in the latest cockpit interior design, including a right-sized center console with fewer buttons to push than before, great climate and other key controls, minimal steering wheel controls, and the ignition switch to the left of the steering column. Just make sure you have the 911-shaped remote fob with you before you switch it on.

On top of the center stack is the touch TFT screen for Porsche's infotainment systems, predominantly Porsche Communication Management (PCM). PCM is the real heart of connectivity for the 911, which enables Bluetooth connectivity to a mobile device and the ability to use Apple CarPlay. I found the PCM-CarPlay connection to be the best and most reliable of any vehicle I worked with so far. Push the Porsche icon on the CarPlay screen, and it will return you to a host of radio, file playback, and wireless internet options. You can also keep the 911 monitored using Porsche Car Connect, which offers Carfinder, Remote Vehicle Status, and other services. This tester had a Bose surround sound speaker system, filling the cabin with excellent sound.

One thing to consider on the 911 is the lack of trunk space. There is a front compartment with a deep space. It is good enough for a carry-on, but nothing larger. The rear seatbacks do fold down for other small bags to be placed on.

The reason for having the trunk up front is what lies in the rear of the car. Porsche remained true to the 911

The **911** is designed in the latest cockpit interior design, including a right-sized center console with fewer buttons to push than before.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 34 ➔







**Porsche purists might not like the way the steering system works, but they will feel how exacting and tight it truly is.**

formula with the horizontally opposed “boxer” six-cylinder engine. Usually, Carrera models are aluminum naturally aspirated engines that were enlarged and tuned over time. For the Type 991.2, Porsche decided it was time to change things up. Displacement has been reduced to 3.0 liters, while keeping the six-cylinder boxer format. To make up for displacement, Porsche added two turbochargers. The result was more power across the board compared to Type 991 models, along with an increase in fuel economy. My Carrera 4S tester had 420 horsepower and 368 pound-feet of torque on tap.

Normally, turbocharging was reserved for the Turbo and Turbo S model. Porsche felt that the newly turbocharged Carrera and Carrera S will still provide the thrills for owners that might not be ready to handle another 120 to 160 horsepower and the responsibility and respect one must have for the iconic Turbo models. The Carrera 4S is still amazing, no turbo lag and incredible response.

This tester came with Porsche’s PDK automated transmission. While there are those who rather have their 911 with the third pedal (for the clutch) and a seven-speed manual transmission, they will admit that the PDK shifts quicker and responds better with the engine. The 4S designation means that it comes with all-wheel drive that reads traction conditions precisely and provides the right torque mix to the appropriate end of the car.

The available Sport Chrono Package adds two more levels of performance: Sport and Sport +. In Normal, the 911 Carrera 4S is fantastic with great response while providing a firm, but comfortable, ride. Flip the dial to Sport and the transmission and exhaust opens up.

The suspension also tightens up firmer for better cornering, though the 911 corners superbly already. Sport + dials the transmission to hit the limiter quickly for more enthusiastic driving. In fact, choosing the Sport Chrono adds 2/10 of a second on a 0–62 MPH sprint.

Porsche purists might not like the way the steering system works, but they will feel how exacting and tight it truly is. On-center feel is precise and the GT Sport steering wheel size is of a perfect diameter for the car. If you want to know how I determine braking feel and stopping power, the 911 is a great measuring stick. In other words, stopping power is excellent in both normal and panic situations and you certainly feel the big calipers work magic with the ventilated rotors on all four corners.

Porsche did state that its new generation of twin-turbocharged boxer engines were made to be more efficient. I did not expect to hit the average of 24 MPG stated on the sticker. My average was 22.6 MPG. I could live with that, along with adhering the requirement of fueling up with 93 octane gasoline.

For a “basic” 911, you would have to choose a Carrera coupe with rear-wheel drive. The base price of that model is \$89,400. For us in the Upper Midwest, we would be better off adding the number 4 to that model, designating an all-wheel drive model. That would add \$6,900 to your starting price. A Carrera 4S coupe is much more, add another \$14,000 to the base price. To get the Cabriolet like the one we’ve been talking about here, the base price of it is \$122,600 with a complete sticker price of \$150,825.

Is this car worth \$150,825? That depends on how you see the world. We live in a state where our means might be humble or not. Our needs and wants



are measured by how we work, live, love, and celebrate it all. One does not buy a Porsche 911 for the sake of having one. It is a car that embodies its history, legacy, and iconic status that sets the tone of Porsche and its products. It is a desirable car, but it must fit within what you really want from it. To have one to show off, that is your choice. But, if you want a great car that rewards you every day with pure driving pleasure and excitement, the Porsche 911 is exactly that kind of car. The latest one is an excellent choice above all.

Driving this Porsche 911 Carrera 4S Cabriolet takes care of a lifelong goal. This is the kind of car that is made for someone like me: a person who loves the automobile and wants something that is engaging and exciting. It has to be a car that delivers on the promise of daily fulfillment and engagement.

Of the many vehicles I worked with for *Lavender* and other outlets over the past five years, this is absolutely the best car. Period. ■





9:38 AM

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By Randy Stern

# What is Your Fantasy...Drive?



Photos by Randy Stern



What is your fantasy? Before you answer that, consider that this question only applies to an automobile fantasy. It is about stepping out of a comfort zone and onto a different plateau. The everyday

routine of commuting, delivering, hauling groceries, and so forth can only be as mundane as one allows it to be.

An automotive fantasy is a way to escape the mundane routines of life. It is answering the “what if” question that is swirling in your head. What if I got rid of my daily driver for something extraordinary? What

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about 50-plus vehicles inside.

However, they offer much more than just a storage place for your vehicle. AutoVault's owner and founder Mischa Redmond is a dyed-in-the-wool automotive enthusiast. His personal vehicle collection includes some of the most sought-after vehicles in our region. These vehicles include Teslas, BMWs, Porsches, McLarens, Lamborghinis, Bentleys, Audis...and so forth.

Redmond's concept for AutoVault goes beyond just vehicle storage. It is about the celebration of automotive enthusiasm. It is about sharing the enthusiast experience with his clients and the car community.

The most popular offering AutoVault has in store is a "Fantasy Drive." These drives began this year and received a huge reception from AutoVault's clients. The demand has been great with every fantasy drive being sold out through most of the summer.

A Fantasy Drive is a half-day adventure, with five extraordinary vehicles available for a 30-minute stint each. In our case, these vehicles include a McLaren 650S Spider, a Lamborghini Huracan Spyder, a Porsche Cayman GT4, a BMW i8, a Bentley Continental GT V8S, and a Porsche Macan GTS. A boxed lunch is included, but that is not the reason why you sign up for a Fantasy Drive.

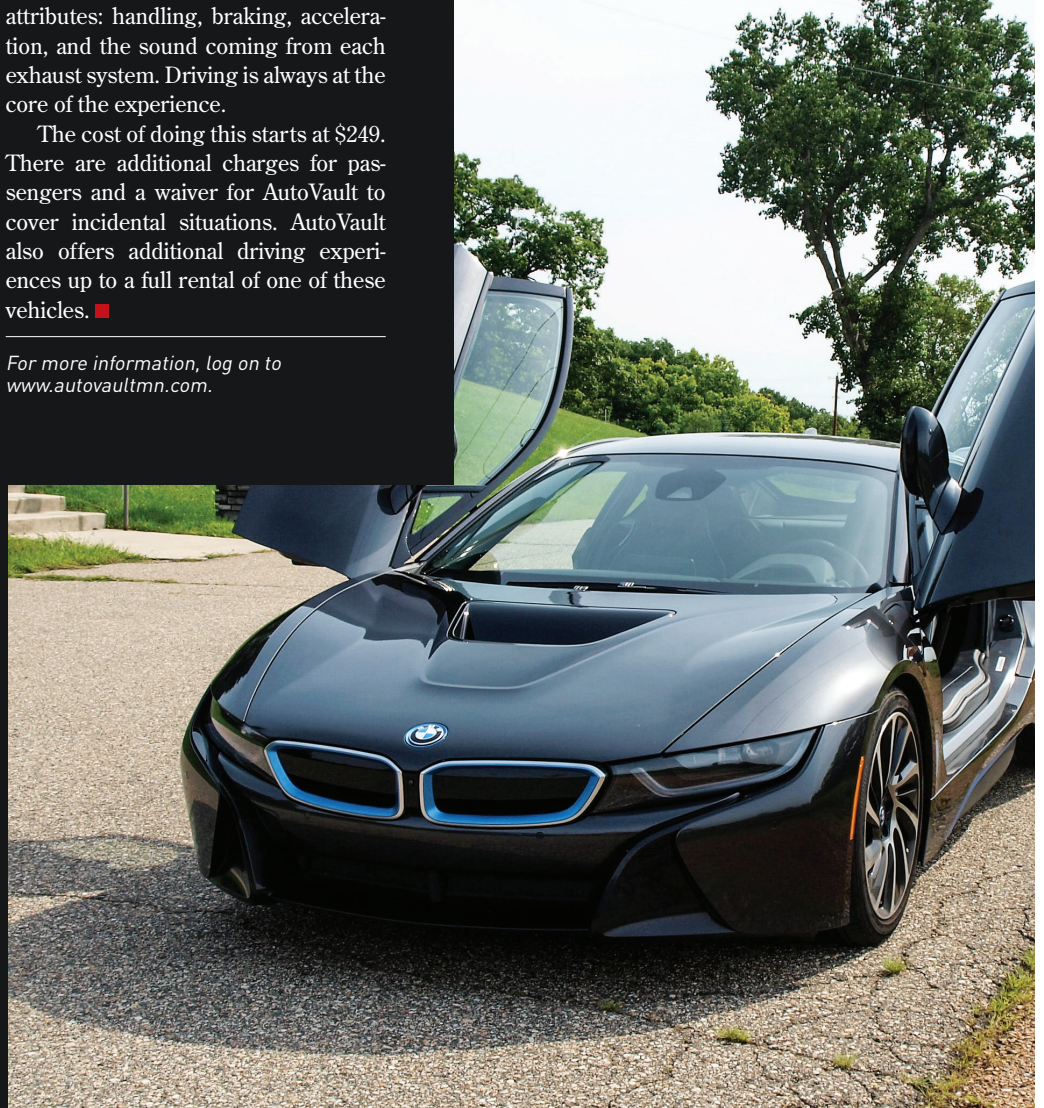
You sign up to experience how it feels to drive something you rarely see on our streets and highways. Each vehicle has its own individual way of driving with its own nuances. The drive leader will go over each and every nuance, so you can feel comfortable behind the wheel. Most of these vehicles offer automatic shifting, except for the Porsche Cayman GT4. Non-manual

drivers can use an alternate vehicle to the Cayman GT4 during the designated shift behind the wheel.

Each Fantasy Driver is treated to wonderful roads. Our group explored some great roads deep in Dakota and Scott Counties. It might get a bit fast out there, but within reason. These roads were made to explore each of the cars' attributes: handling, braking, acceleration, and the sound coming from each exhaust system. Driving is always at the core of the experience.

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By Shane Lueck

# The Lift Garage: Mending Cars and Lives

W

orking with people experiencing homelessness, longtime social worker Cathy Heying repeatedly saw how devastating the prohibitive cost of commercial car repair could be. As she describes, in a domino effect, people who couldn't afford to get their cars fixed couldn't get to work and lost their jobs. Without jobs, they lacked the money to pay for

housing and ended up in shelter.

It was also evident to Heying that many people who could not afford the cost of commercial car repair felt that they equally could not afford to stop driving these dangerous vehicles. Too often they spent a bleak Minnesota winter living in cars without brakes or heat. That's when she got the idea for The Lift Garage, an affordable, nonprofit auto repair service for Minnesotans of limited means. It's a new idea that meets a pressing need.

With a degree in social work from Loras Col-

lege in Dubuque, Iowa and a master's in pastoral ministry from St. Mary's University in Winona, Minnesota, much of her adult life has been in social services and faith-based social justice work. During her stint with St. Stephen's Human Services, Heying encountered countless people for whom broken down vehicles meant the difference between being housed and not housed.

"The church hosted a shelter for homeless men and at the time beds were given away via a lottery system. If someone didn't get a bed

CONTINUED ON PAGE 42 ➔





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they were forced to look elsewhere for shelter," Heying remembers. "Often, I saw men who held onto beat up cars that ran intermittently. They not only used those cars to look for or get to work but they would use them as shelter when they didn't get a bed. I was regularly moved when I'd go home at night and see four guys piled into one of those cars to sleep at night. People in poverty are among the most hospitable and generous folks I know."

According to Heying, people would also often show up at the church asking for money to get their car fixed. She says, "It often was a story like this: 'I am wondering if the church could pay for this \$500 car repair? I live in Minneapolis but work second shift in Chaska and there is no bus that runs from there to here when I get off at 10:30 at night. If I don't get the car fixed, I can't get to work and then I'll lose my job. If I lose my job I won't be able to pay rent and my family will be evicted.' We would help when we could but it was never enough. I kept thinking that perhaps we needed low cost car repair. But I wasn't sure how that would happen or that it should be me."

Heying admits, she knew very little about cars, was completely satisfied with her life and job, was still paying off graduate school student loans, and had zero interest in going back to school. But, the idea just wouldn't leave her alone and she looked into Dunwoody College of Technology, enrolling in the fall of 2008 and graduating in 2010 with a degree in auto technology.

"It was a *really* hard two years," she reflects. "I was in over my head and cried many days. But with the help of some amazing instructors and other supports in my life, I got through. I didn't necessarily have the vision of what is now The Lift Garage in my head when I went to school. I thought perhaps it would be me fixing cars in my driveway so I thought I should have some skills."

But doors kept opening and in 2013 The Lift Garage opened one day a week, subletting one bay. Now, serving as the executive and operations director, Heying's nonprofit is open four or five days a week, nine hours a day with three bays.

Heying admits there was a momentous learning curve, not only in learning the language of the automotive world, but learning business, financials, and nonprofit governance. "There was a need to raise money so we could apply for nonprofit status," she remembers. "We needed to get donors to believe in us when this was nothing but a vision. It's amazing to look back on it now and see how far we've come and how much I personally have grown and learned through this."

In addition to Heying, a front office staffer has a degree in sociology and she says all of Lift Garage's technicians have personal experience that allow them to understand the challenges their customers face. "They've all struggled with poverty, a couple with homelessness," she says. "While it is not our primary mission to hire people with barriers to employment we

are certainly proud to give an opportunity to someone who might not find it elsewhere."

And their customers reap the benefits of their commitment to helping those who need it. The Lift Garage charges \$15 per hour for labor plus parts at cost. To compare, Heying says a traditional shop charges around \$100 per hour for labor and often a 50–70 percent mark up on parts. To date, The Lift Garage has served over 660 customers, completed 1,300 repairs, and saved low-income Minnesotans about a half a million dollars in car repair costs.

"Providing quality discounted car repair is the primary way we live our mission but we also provide free pre-purchase inspections to people who qualify for our services," Heying adds. "We really want to support people in purchasing the best car they can for their limited money. They do not have to wait on the waiting list for this service and we don't charge anything."

Appointments for The Lift Garage's service and well-known hospitality (they provide toys and books for waiting children, and, if they haven't eaten, provide snacks) can be as far as two or three months out, something that Heying says isn't surprising.

"Given how dependent we all are on our vehicles, it only makes sense that low income folks are, too, if not more so," she says. "For many of us, we are lucky enough to have a second vehicle in our household, have money to take an Uber, or friends that can help us out. But for people living in poverty, the broken down car is often the only one they have and so it needs to get fixed. This is compounded by the fact that many of our customers work low wage service industry jobs, the kind where they don't get vacation or sick time and don't have a lot of flexibility. This means that they are even more likely than other folks to lose their job if they can't get there because of a broken down car."

"The three-month wait is a huge challenge for us," she continues. "When we were open one day a week we had a three-month waiting list and now, three years later, we are open five days a week with three full-time techs and three bays and we still have a three-month waiting list. Clearly the need is huge and significant expansion hasn't changed the wait time so we're a little unsure how to move forward with getting that list down. We're adding another bay and another full-time tech in the next couple of months which will allow us to add about 30–40 appointments a month so we'll see if that makes a dent in anything."

It's not just keeping up with demand that provides Heying and her staff a challenge. Usually they are working on old cars with deferred maintenance, which translates to regularly encountering extremely rusted or broken parts and parts that can be hard to find. "This detracts from our efficiency and makes it harder to meet the demand," she says. "And although this continues

to improve, we don't have state-of-the-art diagnostic equipment which means we can't always diagnose problems or we have to figure out an alternative (often slower) way to diagnose."

The Lift Garage's clients' income must be at 150 percent of the federal poverty guideline or below. That translates to \$18,200 per year for a household of one, \$30,000 for a household of three. There are no geographic limitations on who they serve, but Heying says they must be able to get the vehicle to the garage as they don't have a tow truck.

"They must have a car we work on (no German cars, no Cadillacs) and a repair service that we do," Heying adds. "The income restrictions are a bit of a challenge in that we know that if someone has a household of three and is making \$32,000 per year they can't magically afford full-rate car repair. We just had to draw the line somewhere and even with where we drew the line we still can't keep up with demand. So if we drew the line at a place that would include more people, we'd never meet the need."

The Lift Garage relies heavily on donations to allow for car repair services at such a discounted rate. About 60 percent of donations come from individuals (the other 40 percent comes from churches, grants, small foundations, and the like). More than just financial, The Lift Garage accepts in-kind donations of unopened automotive fluids (oil, brake fluid, etc.) and Heying loves volunteers, both on the shop side and front office side, in addition to volunteers to serve on committees (personnel, fundraising, finance, governance, etc.).

"It costs us the same as any other shop to run ours," Heying says. "We have insurance, staff, rent and utilities, shop supplies, etc. We need to cover those costs with the support of the community. We are so grateful for any and all levels of support; we have some donors who give thousands but we also have a nun who gives us \$5 a month!"

"We don't want to be another place that runs people through the door, we want people to stay as long as they need and always feel like we have the time they need to feel good about their car repair," Heying adds. "I always say that we are grief counselors, financial counselors, resource specialists, social workers, and then we fix cars on the side. We spend a lot of extra time with people helping them understand their options, offering advice, easing their anxiety. Just this week I watched one of the technicians come to talk with a customer and end up sitting with her for about 30 minutes answering her questions. While this doesn't help us get cars out the door any faster, it does honor our commitment to giving everyone the best service we can with dignity and hospitality." ■

For more information or to make a donation, visit [www.thelif Garage.org](http://www.thelif Garage.org).





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# Pan-demic

Yesterday I was at the zoo with my girlfriend's tween son, Horace, desperately searching for the otter exhibit. (Note: Horace is not his real name, but it should be. He's amazingly old-timey. He goes to bed with a hot water bottle, holds strident views on linen thread count, and has requested a silk smoking jacket for Christmas. He's like a 12-year-old pasha from the Ottoman Empire.)

"Let's ask that lady in the information booth," I said, pointing at a sweet-faced gray-haired woman wearing what appeared to be a home-made macramé sweater vest.

"Oh, Jennifer," Horace said in that tone that he uses to verbally slap me for my stupidity. "How do you know that she identifies as a woman?"

I was confused by the question, and suspected that whatever answer I gave would be terribly wrong. "Umm, because she has breasts and is wearing a macramé sweater vest?"

He sighed heavily and shook his head in sad defeat. This kid really loves me and it so disappoints him that I am such an idiot. He treats me like a favored pet that's slightly brain damaged.

"Oh, Jennifer, you can't just *assume* (his favorite word!) that just because she looks like a female that she identifies as such." (I'm not kidding! He really talks this way!)

Ever since Horace entered middle school, he's been vigilant about challenging my girlfriend's and my views on gender and sexuality. Dinner time has become something akin to the Inquisition, where he sets us up with questions that he knows we'll answer incorrectly and then spends the rest of the evening punishing us for our heresy against modern queer doctrine.

Most evenings, after we exercise the only power we have over him (his 9 p.m. bedtime) we retreat to our room, hide under the sheets, and bitterly commiserate about how we're the gays in this family and how

dare he tell us that we are behind the times on gender stuff. But, since he terrifies us, we complain very quietly because we don't want him to leap out of bed and lecture us until midnight on our backwards thinking.

This all started a year ago when I innocently asked him if he had a crush on any girls at school. He was in fifth grade, and we had been discussing how some of his friends already had girlfriends.

"Oh, Jennifer, why would you *assume* that I'm interested in girls," he scolded.

The first club he joined in middle school was the GSA. I wrongly *assumed* that the acronym stood for Gay Straight Alliance.

"Wrong, again," he said. "Gender Sexuality Allegiance." And then went on to lecture me about how my binary views on gender and sexuality were as old-timey as his hot water bottle. He said the GSA is considered the coolest club in school.

He told me that many of his friends identify as pansexual, demisexual, sapiosexual, transsexual, heteroflexible, homoflexible, or any combination of -sexual/-flexibles. And then had to define each of these designations because, again, I'm an imbecile.

In my defense, I explained that when I was in middle school, identifying as anything other than straight was not an option. And even at age 25, when I first met his mom, we were so scared of our attraction that we ran screaming from each other and retreated to the comforts of heterosexuality for years.

"Back in my day," I said, "you were either straight or gay. There was no *pan*-anything. We even looked askance at bisexuals. We just thought they were flakey. They simply couldn't make up their minds and commit!"

He responded by shaking his head sadly at my entire pathetic generation. ■

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## ADVERTISER INDEX

### Adult

MegaMates..... 45

### Arts & Entertainment

Cowles Center for Dance & Performing Arts..... 19

### Automotive

Borton Volvo ..... 41  
Fiat Minneapolis..... 37  
Further Performance Imports... 39  
Hagen's Auto Body ..... 37  
LaMettry's Collision..... 37  
Rosedale Chevrolet ..... 35, 39  
White Bear Mitsubishi..... 3

### Bars & Nightlife

19 Bar ..... 43  
Gay 90's ..... 45

### Beverages

Lowry Hill Liquors, Lakeside  
Wine & Spirits..... 25

### Events

Lavender's First Thursdays... 51  
Lavender's Score Thursdays 51

### Event Venues & Services

D'Amico & Partners ..... 23

### Financial

US Bank..... 11  
Wells Fargo Bank..... 7

### Grocery Stores

Whole Foods Market..... 21

### Health & Wellness

Mill District Dental..... 17  
MNSure..... 9  
Northland Therapy Center... 9

Parkside Dental..... 39  
UCare ..... 10  
University of Minnesota,  
Infectious Diseases..... 7

### Home Furnishings & Accessories

FrameWorthy..... 5  
Merriment Adornments..... 43

### Home Services

House Lift Remodeler..... 6  
Select Surfaces..... 27  
Standard Heating & Air  
Conditioning ..... 27  
Trinity Exteriors..... 11  
Zen Windows ..... 35

### Insurance

Bartell, Dawn ..... 43  
Ron Strychar, Horizon  
Agency ..... 39

### Jewelry

Max's..... 5  
Scheherazade Jewelers..... 5  
Shane Co. .... 52  
Wedding Day Diamonds..... 2

### Legal

Bortel Firm, LLC..... 19  
Heltzer Law Office..... 5  
Jerry Burg, Attorney at Law. 11  
Robichaud & Alcantara, P.A. 6

### Media & Communications

Radio K 770 ..... 37

### Optical

Origins Eye Clinic ..... 35

### Organizations

The Aliveness Project..... 19

### Restaurants

Al Vento ..... 21  
Burger Moe's..... 21  
French Meadow Bakery  
& Café..... 23  
Jakeeno's Pizza & Pasta..... 23  
Blue Plate ..... 25  
Melting Pot, The..... 23  
Milton's ..... 21  
Park Tavern..... 21  
Red Cow..... 23

### Travel & Accommodations

AC Hotel..... 25  
Barkers Island Inn..... 17  
The InterContinental Hotel,  
Citizen Supper Club ..... 27

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#### Weisman Art Museum

Free admission every day. Located on the Green Line. Contemporary and early American modernism art. 333 E. River Rd. Minneapolis, MN (612) 625-9494 [www.wam.umn.edu](http://www.wam.umn.edu)

### MUSIC

#### Radio K 770

Radio K is the student-run radio station of the University of Minnesota 330 21st Ave. S. 610 Rarig Center University of Minnesota Minneapolis, MN (612) 625-3500 [www.radiok.org](http://www.radiok.org)

### PERFORMING ARTS

#### CANTUS

"The premier men's vocal ensemble in the United States." - Fanfare Magazine Minneapolis, MN (612) 435-0055 [www.cantussings.org](http://www.cantussings.org)

#### Hennepin Theatre Trust

Orpheum, State, Pantages and New Century Theatres Twin Cities' best live entertainment: Broadway shows, music concerts, comedy, dance and more! Minneapolis, MN 1-800-982-2787 [www.HennepinTheatreTrust.org](http://www.HennepinTheatreTrust.org)

#### Jungle Theater

Professional theater producing contemporary and classic works in an intimate setting in the Lynlake neighborhood. 2951 Lyndale Ave. S. Minneapolis, MN 55408 (612) 822-7063 [JungleTheater.com](http://JungleTheater.com)

#### Minnesota Orchestra

Enriching, inspiring and serving our community as a symphony orchestra internationally recognized for artistic excellence. 1111 Nicollet Mall Minneapolis, MN (612) 371-5656 (800) 292-4141 [www.minnesotaorchestra.org](http://www.minnesotaorchestra.org)



## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

### **Northrop - University of Minnesota**

An epicenter of discovery and transformation celebrating innovation in the arts, performance, and academics.  
84 Church St. SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55414  
(612) 625-6600  
northrop.umn.edu

### **Ordway Center for the Performing Arts**

Hosting, presenting, and creating performing arts and educational programs that enrich diverse audiences.  
345 Washington St.  
St. Paul, MN  
(651) 224-4222  
www.ordway.org

### **The Minnesota Opera**

World-class opera draws you into a synthesis of beauty; breathtaking music, stunning costumes, and extraordinary sets.  
620 N. 1st St.  
Minneapolis, MN 55401  
(612) 333-6669  
mnoopera.org

### **Park Square Theatre**

Theatre for your heart, mind and soul  
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Historic Hamm Building  
20 W. 7th Pl. / 408 St. Peter St.  
St. Paul, MN 55102  
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www.parksquaretheatre.org

### **Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus**

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Minneapolis, MN  
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chorus@tcgmc.org  
www.tcgmc.org

### **VocalEssence**

Now in our 47th year, VocalEssence is a leading arts organization based in Minnesota.  
1900 Nicollet Mall  
Minneapolis, MN 55403  
(612) 547-1451  
www.vocalescence.org

### **POLITICS & RIGHTS**

#### **OutFront Minnesota**

Delivering programs/services in the area of public policy, anti-violence, education, training and law.  
310 E. 38th St., Ste. 204  
Minneapolis, MN  
(612) 822-0127  
www.outfront.org

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#### **Central Lutheran Church (ELCA)**

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333 S. 12th St.  
Minneapolis, MN  
(612) 870-4416  
www.centralmpls.org

#### **Edina Community Lutheran Church**

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Edina, MN  
(952) 926-3808  
www.eclc.org

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(612) 870-7800  
www.ourcathedral.org

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797 Summit Ave.  
St. Paul, MN  
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www.hohchurch.org

#### **United Methodist Reconciling Churches**

Congregations around Minnesota that intentionally welcome all people regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.  
www.mnrcumc.org

### **SPORTS & RECREATION**

#### **Twin Cities Goodtime Softball League (TCGSL)**

Join 500 GLBT softball players as we celebrate 36 years of gay softball in Minnesota.  
P.O. Box 580264  
Minneapolis, MN  
www.tcgsll.org

### **STATE FAIRS**

#### **Minnesota State Fair**

The "Great Minnesota Get-Together" provides a world-class showcase that is innovative, entertaining and fun.  
1265 Snelling Ave. N.  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
(651) 288-4400  
www.mnstatefair.org

### **TRAVEL**

#### **Visit Duluth**

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21 W. Superior St., Ste. 100  
Duluth, MN  
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www.visitduluth.com



# Hook-Up In Amsterdam

Overheard at a coffee shop: “Gay men these days are just about hooking up. If only they could learn to be emotional. There’s nothing emotional or meaningful about hooking up with a stranger.”

I remember pushing through the crowds of tourists, the sounds of the nightlife, the street entertainers, the stoned twentysomethings pushing into each other; jostling, motioning at a restaurant a block away, laughing slowly like thick honey, oozing into the smoky night.

Amsterdam was not like the other cities I had visited. Joining a group of travelers was not as straightforward as in Dublin and London. I wander into a bar, hoping to find a group of backpackers to start up conversation with. As I push in the door, I see a young man sitting alone at the bar, hair a bit unkempt, jaw angular, shoulders broad. I sit next to him and order from the bartender. I can feel him looking my direction. He starts a conversation and I can see we recognize each other for who we are. His voice is deeper than I imagine, his smile lopsided. I find myself smiling back.

We order a beer, then two. I do not remember the words we exchange. I remember more the way we lean forward, the way, when we laugh, we brush the upper arm of the other with our hand. The way we laugh with eyes cast downward before briefly looking up, locking eyes, half-smiles. And then the laughter again, the walls of ourselves. Little glimpses. Who was I seeing?

You can smell marijuana from the “coffee shop” next door. The bar grows more crowded, pressing us closer. We giggle more then, bumping into each other. We chat with a group from Australia, growing raucous as we argue over what the best museum is to visit at night. He and I grow a little quiet all of sudden, distancing ourselves from the crowd. As if in quiet agreement, we head to the door.

We wander outside, begin to walk. We walk in silence and the stars dot the sky in silver lights. It’s implied where we’re going but we don’t speak it. His hand brushes mine, once, twice, I wrap my fingers around his and feel him squeeze. I am young, inexperienced, a young gay man who’s too afraid to sleep around and too afraid to date. In the States, I do not hold a man’s hand. Here I do.

We stop at a bridge over the canal. That moment that’s always more awkward when it’s not in a movie scene. A giggle, lean forward, a laugh,

then we both lean forward, lips brush. Another one a moment later, a bit more passionate. I give that wry grin I always do in such a moment. We laugh. “I like you,” he says.

We enter his apartment, climb the stairs, collapse on his bed. We kiss. We laugh. We learn more about each other in that breathless hour than we ever would in words.

We sit beneath the stars on his balcony afterward and tell the stories we only tell ourselves.

I wake up at 3:14 a.m. It flashes on the alarm clock. The city is quiet; there are few cars in Amsterdam. A single shaft of light enters from the street. I shift and feel him stir. Quiet breathing. I feel his arms tighten around me. I kiss his hand.

I awaken to an empty bed. I hear clanging from down below. I walk down from the loft of his apartment to see him cooking eggs and that European bacon which is more like ham. He flashes a smile when he sees my face. Walks over for a kiss.

He tells me he’ll be ready in about ten minutes. I wander into the other room, peruse the books on his shelves. A few are in English. I see a keyboard and flick it on. I play some songs I know, mostly minimalist pieces, a little Phillip Glass. The light in Amsterdam is whiter than anywhere else I know. Or it is that particular morning. It reflects off the canal on the other side of the windowpane.

Phillip Glass sounds like the rain, all the transparent lightness and the pattering whispers without that melancholy. Or the sadness seems distant somehow. Maybe because it’s beautiful. Each song is so short, a little variation on one theme, one emotional core. It’s a connection between you as a listener and... and...

I’m alone at the piano until he comes in and puts his hand on my shoulder.

“What are you playing?” he asks.

“Just a little song I learned.”

“It’s beautiful,” he says.

I look into his eyes.

We eat breakfast, walk outside, kiss, hug a little longer than we would as friends. I wander out into the white Amsterdam morning.

I know I will never see him again. ■



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